

the

GLOXINIAN

The Journal for Gesneriad Growers

Vol. 48, No. 4

Fourth Quarter 1998



Aeschynanthus hildebrandii 'Topaz'

American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society, Inc.

A non-profit membership corporation chartered by the State of Missouri

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Gesneriad Research Foundation — 1873 Oak St., Sarasota, FL 34236-7114. Individual, \$25; Family, \$35; Club, \$100. Visit our greenhouse and rainforest when in the area. Telephone (941) 365-2378. <hwiehler@aol.com>

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Aeschynanthus hildebrandii 'Topaz'
exhibited by Barbara Krueger was awarded
Best in Show at the 1998 AGGS Convention
Flower Show. Photo by Michael Riley.

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President's Message

Jon Dixon <president@aggs.org>
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I never imagined, back in June of 1989 when I decided at the last minute to drive down to Southern California to attend the AGGS Convention in Costa Mesa, that nine years later I would be attending my tenth convention in a row. My decision to attend that year was in part because of my interest in AGGS and partly because it was within driving distance; and I would be able to visit the many interesting nurseries, greenhouses, and botanical gardens in the area. For me, at that time, I thought I would take in the lectures and hopefully find some interesting new plants in the salesroom. Outside of my local chapter members, I knew very few people in AGGS. It was not my first convention, but the first one since our chapter had hosted one in 1984. In my mind I couldn't justify the cost of traveling for just five programs and the chance to buy some plants. But what I experienced that year and in subsequent years was so much more. There was the week-long exchange with other gesneriad growers—the informal discussions held in the lobby, at the breakfasts, luncheons and banquets, or during the field trips to nurseries and gardens. Then there was the show, and the chance to see and study so many gesneriads new to me or ones I had never seen "in the flesh". After that week I began to realize why so many of us attend convention year after year.

The next year, the convention was in Quebec City. I couldn't miss that one. Had the convention been anywhere else I might not have attended. But, the draw of Canada, Quebec, and the fabulous Le Chateau Frontenac, our hotel, was just too special to pass by. It was, of course, a great convention. The city with its 17th century architecture, the streets filled with live music as part of the music festival, the friendly French-speaking citizens, who nonetheless would effortlessly switch, with a smile, to speaking for us in English, with mock incredulity that we only spoke one language, made memories that enhanced the experiences of the convention. I was hooked.

The next year took us to Baltimore, and for me another carefree convention. But, later, in the following spring, something happened to me. I was asked to join the Board. "Who, me? ... No, no, no, no! There must be some mistake!" I wasn't an insider, an organizer, or even a long-time convention go-er. But I couldn't say "No!", and my carefree days were over. From then on I would have to attend Board meetings and write reports, but most importantly I would have to be concerned with the operation and future of the society. At New Orleans I attended my first Board meeting. I remember my experience of discovering a much larger group than I expected (nearly forty of us), freezing in the frigid meeting room while all around us the city was basking in ninety degree heat.

In 1992 we were in Boston, another memorable week. I remember our boat ride on a drizzly fog-shrouded Fourth of July. I went up to the roof deck of the boat, where all alone I enjoyed the mist, the darkness, and the solitude. Gradually others, one by one, found the roof deck until I was surrounded by the entire convention, the quiet replaced with the hubbub of conversation, the melancholy replaced by joy.

Toronto, another great city, and there we were in the heart of it all. That year, having discovered the Internet, I canvassed the convention imploring others to get "on-line". I only found seven others with email addresses, while most thought it was a cute idea but way beyond their capability. "It would never become very popular", I was told. Ha!

Then it was our turn again, as the convention came to Northern California. I found myself all over the place—microphones, slide projectors, luncheons running late, last minute changes to the field trip and those sprinklers at the garden that went crazy. And then, during the tour of Strybing Arboretum, someone looked down at a plain green little shrub and saw something about the little red flowers that looked familiar. "It's a Gesneriad! It's *Mitraria*! Look how huge it is!"

And so, each year the memories that do not fade: Manhattan, Denver, and finally this year in Chicago. Each city, each convention making moments that stay with me throughout the year. Nine years, ten conventions and next year—Nashville! I can't wait.

Jon



AGGS President Jon Dixon and AGGS Founder Elvin McDonald

Convention black and white photos courtesy of Maryjane Evans, Jeanne Katzenstein, Michael Riley, Colleen and David Turley, M.J. and David Tyler, and Wallace Wells.

Letter

Dear Readers of THE GLOXINIAN. A very big hello and thank you from the bottom of my heart. I'm still in shock that I won Best in Show. This is such a big honor for me, and to think that I didn't think my plants were big enough or pretty enough to even enter the show. But my mom, Joyce Schoning, said that they were very beautiful plants and good enough to show.

So my husband Jeff and I brought my plants to the hotel on Thursday night and entered them into the show. I couldn't stay long because I had to get home in order to get ready for work on Friday. Imagine my surprise when I came back Friday evening for the awards banquet. My mom and Nancy Maybloom congratulated me and said that I did great! I went around the show room and looked at my plants and saw that all five of my entries had ribbons on them. I felt so proud!

The awards presentation started and all kinds of names were called. They called Nancy Maybloom, and I had my fingers crossed that she would win Best in Show. She had some of the most beautiful plants I have ever seen. She won Runner-up to Sweepstakes, then another name was called for Sweepstakes. Well, I thought, we're done.

I started to turn to my mom and ask her if I missed which plant won Best in Show. Then they called my name. I thought I was going to get an award for *Sinningia* 'Merry Christmas' which is my favorite plant next to *Aeschynanthus hildebrandii* 'Topaz'. I walked up, and they said 'Merry Christmas' had won. I was so pleased. Then they said 'Topaz' won also—a total of three special awards. And then they announced that Best in Show was *Aeschynanthus hildebrandii* 'Topaz'. I had all I could do to stop from falling over! I'm still having a hard time believing that out of all the wonderful flowering plants at the show that the judges picked my 'Topaz'!

I would like to give special thanks to my mom and Nancy Maybloom for pushing me to exhibit my plants in the Convention Flower Show, the first one that I've entered. I also thank all the members in our club for their help. It was a great show and I had a ball!

A special thank you also to a gentleman named Wallace Wells. At convention we saw many of the tee shirts he made. Mom asked if he could make me one with my 'Topaz' on it, and he said he would see what he could do. Well last week I had inventory at work (Wal-Mart where I am a claims manager). I had been working 12 to 14 hours a day for the past week or so. I came home just a few days ago after working 14 hours straight, and there on the kitchen table sat a package for me. I opened it and what a great surprise. Wallace had made a tee shirt for me with my 'Topaz'. It's so nice—he made my day. It came when I really needed a pick-me-up. I cannot thank him enough.

Again, thank you for choosing my plant as Best in Show. I hope to see you in Nashville!

—Barbara Krueger



Nancy Maybloom and Joyce Schoning



Wallace Wells

Seed Fund

Maryjane Evans <pollin8r@aol.com>
194 Morris Turnpike, Randolph, NJ 07869

On this year's trip to Ecuador with the Gesneriad Research Foundation study group I saw yet another area of the amazingly gesneriad-rich habitat in this small country.

Cleopatra sailing down the Nile on her royal barge never had a finer time than I did, riding in a dugout canoe on the Rio Cuyabeno, seeing gesneriads growing on the trees and banks. Looking up through the dappled sunlight, we could see trichanthas, drymonias, dalbergarias with splashes of red on their leaves, codonanthes laden with red and lavender berries swinging from the branches, and beslerias growing on the banks. Hikes along trails, roadsides, and streams delighted us with gasteranthus, napeanthus, monopyle, heppiella, kohleria, alloplectus, and capanea in bloom.

And then there was the rain—spectacular, drumming, drenching, ark-building quantities of tropical rain followed by equally spectacular quantities of mud. We learned to say *barro*, *fango*, and *lodo*, all Spanish words for mud and mire. And now, without even getting your feet wet, you can grow these great plants and have a little bit of rainforest of your own!



The beautiful lavender berry of *Codonanthe uleana*
And the red berry of *C. crassifolia*

We extend thanks to Marilyn Allen, Helen Bortvedt, Mary Bozoian, Norma Chenkin, Karyn Cichocki, Arlene Dewell, Jon Dixon, John Farina, Katherine Henwood, Jeff and Pauline Hirsch, Charles Lawn, Toshijiro Okuto, Ben Paternoster, Jeff Smith, Elaine Stutt, MJ and Dave Tyler, Russell White, and the Smithsonian Institution for their generous contributions to the Fund.

Special thanks go to the Gesneriad Research Foundation for contributing all the seed collected in Ecuador and to Marlene Beam, Laura Johnson, and Peter Shalit for making multiple contributions.

ADDITIONS:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <i>Alloplectus dodsonii</i> (yellow) | <i>Drymonia affinis</i> GRF98109 |
| GRF98184 (MT) | <i>Drymonia coccinea</i> GRF9851 |
| <i>Alloplectus tetragonoides</i> GRF98153 | <i>Drymonia coccinea</i> GRF9873 |
| <i>Alloplectus</i> sp. nov. (<i>prunifer</i> ined.) | <i>Drymonia coccinea</i> GRF98150 |
| GRF98174 | <i>Drymonia hoppii</i> GRF98103 |
| <i>Alloplectus</i> sp. (yellow) GRF98151 | <i>Drymonia pulchra</i> GRF9889 (L) |
| <i>Besleria</i> sp. (yellow) GRF9853 | <i>Drymonia pulchra</i> GRF98113 (L) |
| <i>Besleria</i> sp. (orange) GRF98139 | <i>Drymonia urceolata</i> (red w/yellow) |
| • <i>Chirita fimbrisepala</i> #2 (R) | GRF98154 (LM) |
| • <i>Chirita (fimbrisepala</i> × <i>fimbrisepala</i> | <i>Gasteranthus wendlandianus</i> (w/red |
| #2) × self (R) | spots) GRF98166 (LM) |
| <i>Chrysothemis pulchella</i> (Ecuador) | <i>Heppiella ulmifolia</i> GRF98172 (L) |
| <i>Codonanthe crassifolia</i> GRF9858 (B) | <i>Monopyle macrocarpa</i> GRF98117 (LM) |
| <i>Codonanthe crassifolia</i> GRF9869 (B) | <i>Nematanthus</i> sp. MP50 |
| • <i>Codonanthe uleana</i> GRF9868 (B) | • <i>Streptocarpus</i> sp. aff. <i>johannis</i> (R) |
| <i>Columnea nicaraguensis</i> GRF94105 (B) | <i>Trichantha</i> sp. nov. (<i>molinae</i> ined.) |
| • <i>Dalbergaria</i> sp. GRF9852 | GRF98159 |

DELETIONS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Chirita moonii</i> | <i>Sinningia</i> 'Pink Petite' |
| <i>Pentadenia ecuadorana</i> | <i>Solenophora tuxtlensis</i> |
| <i>Sinningia</i> Double Brocade mix | |

- denotes LIMITED quantities

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (B) Suitable for hanging basket. | (M) Medium height; 1 to 2 feet. |
| (L) Low growing; not more than | (MT) Medium to tall. |
| 12 inches. | (R) Rosette in form. |
| (LM) Low to medium height. | |

Seed Packets — \$1.50 each

Please

- Make checks payable to the AGGS Seed Fund in U.S. funds
- To pay by credit card, send your credit card number, expiration date, and signature, and indicate if the card is Mastercard or Visa (\$6.00 minimum)
- Remember to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope
- List alternate choices
- Include your membership number (first number on your mailing label)

1998 Convention Board Meeting Review— Chicago, Illinois

Peter Shalit, AGGS Recording Secretary <ps83@cornell.edu>
1312 Denny Way, Seattle, WA 98122-2519

Superb programs, tours, banquet, and flower show made the 1998 AGGS Convention an unforgettable experience. Behind the scenes, your AGGS Board accomplished a great deal during three meetings at the Convention.

A number of personnel changes among the Officers, Committee Chairs, and Directors were approved by the Board during this Convention:

John Boggan was appointed to replace Frances Batcheller as Chair of the Botanical Review Committee. Pat Richards agreed to replace Isla Montgomery as Chair of the Publications Committee.

Nellie Sleeth will replace Darrell Trout as Finance Committee Chair. Doris Carson will take over the Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund Chair position from Molly Schneider. Molly becomes the new Chair of the Awards of Appreciation Committee, succeeding Cleo Kohm.

New Directors, Pat Richards and Bob Nicholson, were appointed by the President to fill the unexpired terms of Darrell Trout and Mary Clinton.



Helen Freidberg & Arleen Dewell



Pat Richards & Bob Nicholson

At the General Membership Meeting, new Director Doris Brownlie was elected for a first term, and Directors Carol Ann Bonner, Doris Carson, Jon Dixon, Helen Freidberg, Ben Paternoster, and Peter Shalit were re-elected.

Later at the meeting of the Board, the following officers were elected for a second term in office: Helen Bortvedt (Treasurer) and Paul Kroll (Corresponding Secretary). Arleen Dewell was elected as Second Vice President, replacing Helen Freidberg in this position. Continuing Officers include Jon Dixon (President), Susan Grose (First Vice President), and Peter Shalit (Recording Secretary).

The Membership approved an Amendment to the Bylaws permitting the President to nominate a replacement to serve out the unexpired term of any AGGS Officer who does not complete his/her term, with approval of the Board of Directors.

Additionally, the Membership approved an Amendment making the Internet Communications Committee a Standing Committee of AGGS, commensurate with its growing importance to the Society. Our Web Site continues to grow in popularity. A number of new memberships have been generated through the site.

Jon Dixon reported to the Membership that we have a new Chapter, the Pittsburgh Violet and Gesneriad Society. Their charter was presented at the General Membership Meeting.

The Seed Fund has increased again this past year, both in the number of varieties of seed offered as well as in the volume of orders filled. We are indebted to Maryjane Evans for maintaining this ever-increasing asset of AGGS membership.

Regarding publication of THE GLOXINIAN, it was agreed that we will consistently publish more pages (48–56) than our previous standard of 40 pages, including more color photos than in the past. We will also continue publishing our special theme issues which have been so well received.

Our new Advertising Manager, Dale Martens, has succeeded in increasing the number of advertisers for THE GLOXINIAN, hence increasing our revenues. She urged all members to support our advertisers.

Our membership has increased slightly compared to last year. David and MJ Tyler have instituted some new procedures in order to simplify the renewal process.

The Board decided to make some changes in policies and procedures regarding future AGGS Conventions based on recommendations of current and former local convention committees. Plant sales at this year's convention were the largest ever, mainly due to the quantity and variety of new and unusual plant material grown by local chapter members. Steps are being implemented to assure that this trend continues at future convention plant sales.

The AGGS Treasury is doing well. Our Treasurer, Helen Bortvedt, reports that we have diversified our investments, and consolidated our bank accounts. Our new capability to accept credit card (Visa and MasterCard) payments has been very successful, especially in facilitating financial transactions for members outside the United States.

The Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund broke the \$100,000 mark, a milestone, just prior to the Convention. The Convention Auctions, the Online Auction, and additional contributions have since added significantly to that amount. The Fund contributes a percentage of its earnings to the general operating revenue of the Society. Next year's budget goals have been met without a dues increase.



Editor's Note: The Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund report will appear in the First Quarter 1999 issue of THE GLOXINIAN.

Awards of Appreciation

S. Cleopatra Kohm, Chairman
6205 Olohena Road, Kapaa, HI 96746-8705

A maximum of three Awards of Appreciation certificates are presented each year at the Convention Annual Meeting. Criteria for the selection of recipients include importance of service rendered, length of service, and any other duties of merit. Our three recipients this year easily met the requirements.

David Turley is currently chairman of the Internet Communications Committee and his work on the internet has provided international access to AGGS information. The international membership of AGGS has greatly increased because of this accessibility to gesneriad growers in other countries. As a former co-owner of Coda Gardens, he sold unusual plants to discriminating growers. A member of the National Capital Area Chapter for almost fifteen years, he has served as president of the chapter. David is a former Chair of the Nominating Committee and the Publicity and Membership Promotion Committee. He has served as a Director and is a contributing editor of TG. Away from the computer, he is enjoying family life, completing an advanced degree in Information Systems, and watching son Nolan grow and develop.

M. J. Tyler is a member of the Puget Sound Gesneriad Society and of the American Gesneriad Society of San Francisco. She has been a member of AGGS since the early eighties. In addition to sharing Membership Secretary duties with her husband, Dave, she is a master judge and editor of the judges newsletter *Appraisal*. She has been an assistant to Ben Paternoster and previously Frances Batcheller, chairs of Shows and Judging. M.J. is a former administrator of the Department of Anthropology, U.C. Berkeley. She is enjoying retirement and grandson James. A very busy individual, she remains active in a Master Gardener group, aqua-aerobics, and art and sewing projects.

Dave Tyler is the other member of the Membership Secretariat and the database manager of *Appraisal*. He is currently working on compiling updates to the TG Picture Index. Dave was involved in Scientific Instrumentation for seventeen years. As an Ecologist, he taught environmental courses at U.C. Berkeley and was a consultant for fourteen years. Now semi-retired, he dabbles in ham radio and is a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. He and M.J. have worked as a team for a number of years. The work they do, together, for AGGS has been invaluable.





David Tyler, M.J. Tyler, David Turley

Past Recipients of Awards of Appreciation

1977	Paul Arnold Charlotte Rowe	1987	Joseph Batcheller Ted Bona Ruth Webster
1978	Frances Batcheller Carol Saylor William Saylor	1988	Maryann Delaune Felicia McCann Dr. Hans Wiehler
1979	Florence Messick Mel Sater Martin Tanner Renee White	1989	Judy Becker Anthony Crisafulli Jessie Crisafulli
1980	Albert Buell Erica Clayberg Emma Lahr Ruth and Lyndon Lyon	1990	Chris Kunhardt Michael Riley Nellie Sleeth Ellen Todd
1981	Alice Courage Helen Kavanaugh Henry Peterson Laura Progebin	1991	Earl Deroche Molly Schneider Alan Wojcik
1982	Michael Kartuz	1992	Diantha Buell Anne Crowley
1983	Dr. Robert E. Lee Dr. Margaret H. Stone	1993	Stanley Schwartz Margaret Waugespack
1984	S. Cleopatra Kohm David R. Masterson Martin Mines	1994	Jeanne Katzenstein
1985	C. A. Cruikshank Lee Linett Dr. Laurence E. Skog	1995	Mary Bozoian Ben Paternoster Monte Watler
1986	Margaret Belanger Jimmy Dates Isla Montgomery	1996	Celine Chase Betty Tapping Beth Weissman
		1997	Maryjane Evans Ron Myhr Darrell Trout

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June 18, 1998

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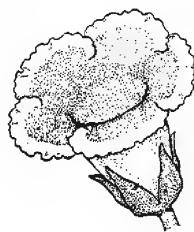
Coming Events

October 24-25 — Illinois — Northern Illinois Gesneriad Society exhibit and sale, Friendship Park Conservatory, 395 W. Algonquin Rd., Mount Prospect. Saturday and Sunday 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Parking and admission free. Contact Nancy Maybloom (847-882-4652) <hsmay@aol.com>.

October 30 – November 1 — Florida — Gesneriad Research Foundation Seminar (see details on page 15). Registration fee \$50. Contact Dr. Hans Wiehler, 1873 Oak Street, Sarasota, FL 34236 (941-365-2378) <hwiehler@aol.com>.

November 7-8 — New Jersey — The TriState African Violet Council annual show and sale at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 53 East Hanover Avenue, Morristown. Saturday 1:30 to 5:00 pm; Sunday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Contact Carol Ann Burrell (914-896-8605).

November 7-8 — Missouri — Mid-America African Violet Society 19th annual show and sale at Loose Park Garden Center, 5200 Pennsylvania, Kansas City, MO. Saturday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm; Sunday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. No admission charge. Contact Grace McCurnin (913-722-4085).



Information on the Next GRF Seminar

Dr. Hans Wiehler
1873 Oak Street, Sarasota, FL 34236

At the GRF we are making it easy to learn about gesneriads, genus by genus. What are the special and unique characters of *Drymonia* or *Alsobia*, of *Gloxinia*, *Gesneria*, or *Chirita*? We are studying the history and the biology of each genus, all the species and their illustrations. We get printed handouts, we ask questions, we discuss.

If you aspire to be a knowledgeable grower of gesneriads or perhaps an AGGS flower show judge, then plan to come! These weekend seminars spread information about the basic units of gesneriads, the nearly 150 genera. So far we have treated 28 of these, all from the American tropics, in ten consecutive, annual seminars. These are joyful occasions at the GRF, outside with tables and chairs on the lawn next to the "rainforest", with friends from many parts of the country discussing our favorite plant groups, learning new information, asking more questions. All gesneriad enthusiasts are welcome, and neophytes, too.

The next seminar will be from Friday, October 30th, through Sunday, November 1st, 1998.

Topic #1) Pouches and Trumpets: Pollination strategies and generic alliances in the neotropical Gesneriaceae.

Topic #2) The history and biology of *Nematanthus* (an application of Topic #1).

Topic #3) *Neomortonia*, revisited.

Topic #4) The history and biology of *Lembocarpus*.

Seminar fee is \$50, payable to the GRF at the address above; please register by October 20th. Lodging is available at the Sunshine Motor Lodge (941-365-0350) or other local accommodations. Contact the Gesneriad Research Foundation at 941-365-2378 for more information.



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Arleen Dewell <simon_holland@bc.sympatico.ca>
#311-2366 Wall St., Vancouver, BC, Canada V5L 4Y1

After weeks of hot weather and a brutal thunderstorm that fouled up airline schedules throughout the Northeast, the arrival of the 42nd Annual Convention of the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society was a good omen for Chicago. Tuesday, June 30th, dawned clear and refreshingly cool in the Windy City. I arrived at the Holiday Inn O'Hare International in the early afternoon to find the AGGS Board of Directors already at work taking care of business.

Wednesday, the start of a new month, was the first full day of meetings, classes and more meetings! But first we began with breakfast, where old friendships were renewed and new faces welcomed. The international nature of AGGS was underscored again this year with attendees from far-off Australia, Japan and Sweden.

There were over 50 registrants for Judging School, a new attendance record! A special Design Workshop was coached by Michael Riley within the morning session. Many of us remember the wonderfully creative arrangements Michael has exhibited at convention flower shows over the years, and it was agreed by all that we couldn't have had a more qualified teacher. Those taking Judging School for the first time enjoyed a lively session with Stan Schwartz, while the advanced group had an intense, thought-provoking class with Ben Paternoster, Chair of Shows and Judging. After lunch, all three groups came together for practice judging and discussion. What fun it was to see what had been produced in the Design Workshop with little more than a basic container, some line material and gesneriad flowers, of course. No two were the same, and many of us tapped into design talent we didn't even know existed!

Our first day of convention ended with the most anticipated special interest group meeting of them all—that of the Gesneriad Hybridizers Association. The members of GHA graciously open their meeting to everyone and each year they go to great lengths to include topics of far-reaching interest. This year was one of the best GHA meetings I have ever had the pleasure of attending, thanks to the enthusiastic efforts of Dale Martens. Dr. Jeff Smith of Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, reported on possible new species *Saintpaulia* material found in the collection of the late Sylva Mather of Nairobi, Kenya. Young plants and leaves of this new material were given away in a free raffle later in the meeting.

Next, Ron Myhr of the Toronto Gesneriad Society reported on the work of streptocarpus hybridizer Chris Rose. Ron has visited with Chris in Bristol, England, and showed us slides of some of his recent hybrids. Chris lives in a house with several other people who tolerate his plant fetish. He manages to take advantage of every square inch of available space, growing everything in natural light. If any of you are planning a trip to the U.K. and the genus *Streptocarpus* is your passion, see if you can arrange a visit with Chris.

To conclude the meeting, John Boggan, AGGS Botanical Review Chairman, tempted us with some of the slides that are included in the new



Elizabeth Glazebrook, Kazuo Horikoshi, Ingrid Lindskog



Al Wojcik



Dr. Jeff Smith



Michael Riley with the Design Workshop participants



Thursday tour guides
Dan Harris & Joyce Schoning



Hermann Pigors of Oakhill Gardens



Conventioners outside the Rainforest Café



Enjoying the afternoon at Hausermann Orchids

slide program on the genus *Chirita* which is available for rental now, complete with commentary. If you haven't already done so, contact Marlene Beam, Library and Education Chair, to get your chapter's name on the waiting list. The slides are of excellent quality and well worth the \$20 rental fee.

Thursday we were up early with the brilliant sunshine, ready and eager to see what Chicago had to offer. Most of us headed out to Oak Hill Gardens, owned and operated by Hermann Pigors and family. Hermann welcomed us with refreshments and then allowed us to roam freely throughout all seven clean and well organized greenhouses, filled primarily with orchids and other tropicals. If you want to learn how to run a greenhouse efficiently yet with respect for the environment, spend some time with Hermann and his family at Oak Hill. Many thanks to them for their hospitality.

Greenhouse wandering and lovely fresh air piqued our appetites and soon we were ready for a hearty lunch at the Rainforest Café; definitely not what you would expect to find in a big urban shopping mall! Once inside, we watched colourful reef fish swimming languidly to the rhythms of a tropical rainforest created by trumpeting elephants, (boy, were they life-like), squealing monkeys and exotic birdsong overhead. There were even a few thunder and lightning storms for our dining pleasure! So fortified, we continued our tour to the world famous Hausermann Greenhouses. Four more acres of orchids awaited us, and many found that they could not leave without giving a few more orchids good homes.

If greenhouse hopping was not your cup of tea, our host chapter, the Northern Illinois Gesneriad Society, was ready with the perfect alternative. How about a trip into Chicago to tour some of the great museums the city has to offer? A dozen AGGS conventioners immersed themselves in the fabulous exhibits on display at the Field Museum and the famous Art Institute of Chicago, to name only two. Everyone agreed that it would take at least another week to see everything contained in these two establishments alone! My thanks to M.J. Tyler who agreed to be my roving reporter for this tour.

Too soon it was time to return to the hotel and get down to the serious business of constructing designs, grooming and entering plants in the show. The countdown to the much anticipated plant sale began early, with the lineup forming a good hour before the doors opened. When they did, it was every plant fanatic for herself or himself, charging the tables holding a wide variety of species and hybrid material from many genera, some of it very rare. Bob Nicholson and his assistants did a terrific job restocking tables and putting new plant material out every day, keeping our interest alive. I don't know of anyone who didn't make at least three or four trips a day back to the plant sales room to check out what was new.

The flower show this year was notable for its large number of artistic arrangements totaling 35 (a result of the Judging School Design Workshop, perchance?), and the entry of a commercial display by Paul and Sidney Sorano of Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses. What an honour it was to explore their well staged and beautifully grown exhibit of columneas, nematanthus, aeschynanthus, episcia and gloxinia. Thank you, Paul and Sidney, for driving all those hours from New York State to bring us a valuable added dimension to the flower show. I hope you and other commercial growers will consider exhibiting in future years.



Chuck Stickels at Plant Sales



Maryjane Evans at Seed Sales



Part of the team at Flower Show Entries



David and Colleen Turley with son Nolan helping input data at the Board meeting



Business Manager Michael Riley processing charge slips for the first time at convention plant sales

At the awards banquet, our Master of Ceremonies was introduced—syndicated columnist and author of over 40 books on gardening, Mr. Elvin McDonald. As all of you know, Elvin is also the Founder of the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society. One can only guess what an emotional experience it was for him to see how the organization which he conceived and guided through its early years has evolved into the healthy, dynamic society it is today. He emphasized the importance of caring for and encouraging new and younger members of AGGS not just in our chapters, but at the national/international level as well. This year in particular, the energy and exuberance shown by our first-time convention attendees was pretty hard to miss, and I believe revitalized all of us!

I wish I had more space to acknowledge all those who made Convention 1998 in Chicago the special experience that it was for me. Al Wojcik, Local Convention and Speakers Chair provided a roster of distinguished speakers, which made all our lectures extremely interesting and educational. Molly Schneider and her team worked their usual magic to bring us lively auctions to benefit the Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund. The members of the Northern Illinois Gesneriad Society cannot be thanked enough for delivering a seamless, flawless convention. Without their total commitment, they couldn't have achieved such stellar results.

I hope all of you care for and nurture those new friendships you started at convention and all those new plants you got, too! I want to see those plants all grown up and entered in the convention flower show next year. We should all return home to our chapters and concentrate on increasing and nurturing our membership over the coming year. Public interest in gesneriads is steadily increasing, but it is up to each one of us to provide the perfect environment that will allow that interest to flourish. Let's see how many first-time conventioners we can bring to Nashville in 1999. I can hardly wait!



Opening night Plant Sales

Chapters and Affiliates Report

Jon Dixon <jond@hooked.net>
55 Tum Suden Way, Woodside California 94062

We are pleased to report the affiliation of a new chapter, the Pittsburgh Violet and Gesneriad Society, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Carla Ryan who worked diligently to bring the chapter into AGGS is also the chapter's president. This is the second chapter in AGGS that is both an African Violet Society as well as a Gesneriad Society. The group meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Northland Public Library, 300 Cumberland Road, Pittsburgh. At the 1998 AGGS Convention in Chicago, I awarded the charter to Bob Lubinski, chapter vice president, who attended the convention with chapter member Barbara Buttermore.

Our chapters receive a number of benefits from AGGS. Our excellent library of slide programs, available from Library and Education Chairman Marlene Beam, continues to grow with the new and already very popular *Chirita* program. Chapters also come under the umbrella of the AGGS insurance plan. In *THE GLOXINIAN* and on the AGGS web page can be found the meeting times, programs and special events of chapters. Also, we provide email contacts for chapters from the web page, which in the last two years has become a significant source of new chapter members.

AGGS members interested in forming a chapter should contact me. The procedure is not complicated and the benefits of meeting, learning, and sharing with a group of fellow gesneriad growers add immeasurably to the pleasure of growing our favorite plants.



Old friends and new chat across the meal tables at convention

1998 Convention Flower Show Awards

As always, it is a real pleasure to report the following winners from the 1998 Convention Flower Show held in Chicago. I am especially excited about how well the local growers did in the show. With all their hard work just to put on the convention, it is neat that top honors went to several of the members of the Northern Illinois Chapter! My thanks to all the generous members and chapters who made the awards possible. The award donations from Isla Montgomery, Elaine Niece, Alice Courage in honor of Frances Batcheller, and the Gloxinia Gesneriad Growers in memory of Dale Munger were not awarded and the money shall be used in the color photograph fund for THE GLOXINIAN. Now for the fun...

Special Awards

- SWEEPSTAKES IN HORTICULTURE – to Mary Bozoian for 5 blue ribbons, an award from the New England Chapter of AGGS
- RUNNER-UP TO SWEEPSTAKES – to Nancy Maybloom for 4 blue ribbons, an award from MJ and David Tyler
- SWEEPSTAKES IN ARTISTIC – to Paul Kroll for 3 blue ribbons, an award from L. Mae Mendes in honor of Ruth Jo McCoy (Smith)
- RUNNER-UP TO SWEEPSTAKES IN ARTISTIC – to Bob Clark, an award from Josi Stefaniak
- BEST IN SHOW – to Barbara Krueger for *Aeschynanthus hildebrandii* 'Topaz', a donation for a plaque with a picture of the winning plant from Peter Shalit in memory of John Unterecker
- SECOND BEST IN SHOW – to Dale Martens for *Sinningia pusilla*, an award from Hans and Everdina Inpijn
- BEST ARTISTIC – to Paul Kroll for his arrangement "Great Chicago Fire", an award from the Delta Gesneriad and AV Society in honor of Ruth Jo McCoy (Smith)
- SECOND BEST ARTISTIC – to Lee Linett for her arrangement "Lady in Red", an award from the Greater New York Chapter in memory of Charles Anzalone
- BEST IN THE ARTS – to Julie Mavity-Hudson for her color print of *Sinningia leucotricha*, an award from the Puget Sound Gesneriad Society
- BEST TUBEROUS – to Dale Martens for *Sinningia pusilla*, an award from Lee Linett in honor of the judges and clerks
- BEST RHIZOMATOUS – to Nancy Maybloom for *Achimenes* 'Tetra Rosa Traum', an award from the Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society
- BEST FIBROUS – to Libby Watkins for *Episcia* 'Unpredictable Valley', an award from Lauray of Salisbury
- BEST GROWN FOR FOLIAGE – to Libby Watkins for *Episcia* 'Unpredictable Valley', an award from Maryjane Evans
- BEST NEW INTRODUCTION – to Dale Martens for *Streptocarpus* 'Texas Fantasy', an award from the Suncoast Gesneriad Society
- BEST LESSER-KNOWN GESNERIAD – to Mary Bozoian for *×Brigandra calliantha*, an award from the Northern Illinois Gesneriad Society in memory of Jimmy Dates
- BEST SPECIES – to Mary Bozoian for *Petrocosmea duclouxii*, an award from Helen Freidberg in memory of Anne Crowley
- BEST RECENTLY REGISTERED – to Arleen Dewell for *Sinningia* 'Treva's Treasure', an award from the Gesneriad Hybridizers Association
- BEST STREPTOCARPUS – to Nancy Maybloom for *Streptocarpus* 'Gator's Tail', an award from Helen Bortvedt
- BEST MICRO-MINIATURE SINNINGIA – to Dale Martens for *Sinningia pusilla*, an award from the Frelinghuysen Arboretum Chapter in memory of Susan Schlieder



Achimenes 'Tetra Rosa Traum' exhibited by Nancy Maybloom;
photo by Michael Riley



Sinningia cardinalis exhibited by Karen Makila;
photo by Stanley Schwartz



Sinningia 'Merry Christmas' exhibited by Barbara Krueger;
photo by Jeanne Katzenstein



Episcia 'Unpredictable Valley' exhibited by Libby Watkins;
photo by Stanley Schwartz

- BEST COLLECTION – to Nancy Maybloom for her collection of *Streptocarpus*, an award from the Long Island Chapter in honor of Ed Gaulrapp
- BEST ARRANGEMENT OF FRESH CUT MATERIAL – to Paul Kroll for "Great Chicago Fire", an award from the Long Island Chapter in honor of Rose Freiheit
- BEST CONTAINER GARDEN – to Paul Kroll for his straight-sided terrarium, an award from the Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society
- BEST IN PHOTOGRAPHY – to Julie Mavity-Hudson for her color print of *Sinningia leucotricha*, an award from Daphne Yaremko
- BEST CRAFT – to Dale Martens for "Frances the Gesneriad Doll", an award from Ingrid Lindskog
- BEST COMMERCIAL EXHIBIT – to Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
- BEST EDUCATIONAL EXHIBIT – to Marilyn Allen for "Leaves", an award from the National Capital Area Chapter

Division I – HORTICULTURE

SECTION A – Tuberous Gesneriads in Flower

- Class 1 – to Barbara Krueger for *Sinningia* 'Merry Christmas', a crystal dish from Renee Trenholm and an award from the Greater New York Chapter in memory of Phyllis Rosenbluth
- Class 2 – to Karen Makila for *Sinningia cardinalis*, an award from the American Gesneriad Society of San Francisco
- Class 3 – to Libby Watkins for *Sinningia hirsuta*, an award from the Gloxinia Gesneriad Growers in memory of Emma Lahr
- Class 4 – to Marlene Beam for *Sinningia* 'Kaleidoscope', an award from the Greater New York Chapter in memory of Marty Mines
- Class 5 – to Dale Martens for *Sinningia pusilla*, an award from Bonita Hutcheson

SECTION B – Rhizomatous Gesneriads in Flower

- Class 7 – to Nancy Maybloom for *Achimenes* 'Tetra Rosa Traum', an award from the Grow & Study Gesneriad Club
- Class 9 – to Nancy Maybloom for *Kohleria* 'Empress', an award from Laura Shannon
- Class 10 – to Nancy Maybloom for *Achimenes* 'Camille Brozzoni', an award from Paul & Judy Kroll in honor of Betty Tapping

SECTION C – Fibrous-Rooted Gesneriads in Flower

- Class 11 – to Barbara Krueger for *Aeschynanthus hildebrandii* 'Topaz', an award from Paul & Judy Kroll in honor of Betty Tapping
- Class 12 – to Gary Dunlap for *Chirita* species 'New York', an award from Jeanne Katzenstein
- Class 16 – to Joyce Carpenter for *Episcia* 'Silver Skies', an award from the Delaware Gesneriad Society
- Class 21 – to Marilyn Allen for *Saintpaulia orbicularis*, an award from Aca's Violet-Tree
- Class 23 – to Fay Wagman for *Saintpaulia* 'Petite Ruby', an award from Jean Miller in memory of Geraldine Tordy
- Class 24 – to Doris Brownlie for *Saintpaulia* 'Rob's Hallucination' an award from Violet Ventures
- Class 25 – to Gary Dunlap for *Saintpaulia* 'Wood Trail', an award from the Toronto Gesneriad Society
- Class 27a1 – to Mary Bozoian for *Streptocarpus* 'Cape Beauties', an award from Marlene Beam in memory of Dale Munger
- Class 27a2 – to Dale Martens for *Streptocarpus* 'Al's Pal', an award from the Heart of America Gesneriad Society
- Class 27a3 – to Hans Inpijn for *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Luv It', an award from Violets of the West
- Class 28 – to Joyce Schoning for *Corytoplectus cutucuensis*, an award from the Gateway West Gesneriad Society



Sweepstakes winners Paul Kroll & Mary Bozoian



Sinningia leuchotrica color print
exhibited by Julie Mavity-Hudson
was awarded Best in the Arts



"The Great Chicago Fire"
arrangement exhibited by
Paul Kroll was awarded Best Artistic



Paul and Sidney Sorano of
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses



Petrocosmea duclouxii exhibited by
Mary Bozoian was awarded Best Species

SECTION D – Gesneriads Grown Primarily for Foliage or Fruit

Class 30 – to Libby Watkins for *Episcia* 'Unpredictable Valley', an award from the Tennessee Gesneriad Society in honor of all surviving past Tennessee Gesneriad Society presidents

Class 31 – to Mary Bozoian for *Chirita sinensis* (dwarf), an award from Molly Schneider

Class 33 – to Libby Watkins for *Nautilocalyx pemphidius*, an award from Mary Bozoian in memory of Anne Crowley

SECTION E – New Gesneriads

Class 35 – to Mary Bozoian for *Petrocosmea duclouxii*, an award from the Peninsula Gesneriad Society

Class 36 – to Dale Martens for *Streptocarpus* 'Texas Fantasy', an award from the Greater New York chapter in honor of Irwin Rosenbloom

SECTION F – Lesser-Known Gesneriads Seldom Grown or Seen in Shows

Class 38 – to Mary Bozoian for *Streptocarpus pumilus*, an award from David, Colleen, and Nolan Turley in celebration of Sammuel Linnaeus Ertel

Class 39 – to Mary Bozoian for *×Brigandra calliantha*, an award from David, Colleen, and Nolan Turley in celebration of Sammuel Linnaeus Ertel

SECTION G – Collections of Gesneriads

Class 40 – to Nancy Maybloom for her *Streptocarpus* collection, an award from the Twin Cities chapter

Division II – ARTISTIC

SECTION I – Arrangement of Fresh Cut Plant Material

Class 46 – "The Great Chicago Fire" by Paul Kroll, an award from the Toronto Gesneriad Society

Class 48 – "Chicago Lakefront" by Linda Golubski, an award from the Toronto Gesneriad Society

Class 49 – "The Lady in Red" by Lee Linett, an award from Arleen Dewell

Class 50 – "Wrigley Field" by Bob Clark, an award from Rita Sendic in memory of Ben Sendic

SECTION K – Growing Material in a Planting (Artistically and Horticulturally Balanced)

Class 55 – Terrarium, straight-sided, by Paul Kroll, an award from the Liberty Bell Chapter

Class 57 – Tray landscape by Paul Kroll, an award from the Gesneriad-Dicts of Western New York

Class 58 – Trained *Nautilocalyx* sp. nov. by Ben Paternoster, an award from the New Jersey Chapter

Division III – THE ARTS

SECTION L – Photography

Class 61 – to Dale Martens for her slide of *Streptocarpus dunnii*, an award from the New Jersey Chapter

Class 62 – to Julie Mavity-Hudson for her color print of *Sinningia leucotricha*, an award from Jim and Linda Golubski

Class 63 – to Julie Mavity-Hudson for her black and white print of *Codonanthe digna*, an award from Irwin and Fay Wagman

SECTION M – Crafts Representing Gesneriads

Class 64 – to Bernice Pullen for her drawing of a *Sinningia* hybrid, an award from Lee Linett in honor of Al Wojcik and the Northern Illinois Chapter

Class 66 – to Dale Martens for "Frances the Gesneriad Doll", an award from Nellie Sleeth in memory of Elmer Hovermale

Division IV – COMMERCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL

SECTION N – Commercial

Class 67 – to Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses

SECTION O – Educational

Class 69 – to Marilyn Allen for her "Leaves" exhibit, an award from Marlene Beam in memory of Dale Denham

Class 70 – to Pat Richards for her *Streptocarpus* 'Lavender Rosette' exhibit, an award from the Puget Sound Gesneriad Society

Class 71 – to Ben Paternoster for his *Sinningia nivalis* photo exhibit, an award from the Greater New York chapter in honor of Miriam Goldberg

Now that this list has been compiled, it is time to start thinking about Nashville. Plan to grow some plants to show and, as always, I am most appreciative of any and all award donations. See you in Tennessee!

— Colleen Turley, Award Chair



Paul & Sidney Sorano of Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses entered this beautiful commercial exhibit; photo by Jeanne Katzenstein

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The Story of *Aeschynanthus hildebrandii* 'Topaz'

Barbara Krueger
6654 Riverside Dr., Tinely Park, IL 60477

There's not much to tell, but I would like to share with all of you the story of my *Aeschynanthus hildebrandii* 'Topaz'. My mom came home one day with a yellow-flowered plant. Yellow is my favorite color, and when I see any yellow flowers, I just have to have them. I only have a small growing space for my plants, and so mom gave me this new one. I was so happy and couldn't wait for it to grow and give me those big beautiful flowers. Well, in two weeks it died. I felt so bad. Then mom went to another show and bought me another plant and told me not to kill this one as yellow is hard to find and hard to grow.

Well, I guess I took good care of it as *Aeschynanthus hildebrandii* 'Topaz' won "Best in Show" at the convention flower show. Growing this plant is not hard. I keep it three to four inches from the lights. Right now it's a good ten inches across and is planted in a three-inch pot. I use wick watering because I don't like to water my plants from the top. Our water is hard and has a lot of chemicals in it, and I always get a build-up on my plants if I water them from the top. The plant food I use is whatever I have made up at the time. I always change food from one watering to the next. I feel that way if one type of food should have something more in it or something different,



Barbara Krueger with her Best in Show plant
Aeschynanthus hildebrandii 'Topaz'

it is a good change for my plants. (I don't like eating the same thing day after day either.) I added SuperThrive to all my plants the last two months of watering. That's plant food and SuperThrive, and that's why I think there were so many flowers on my plants. But this plant of 'Topaz' has always had a lot of flowers.

The soil I use is very light. It seems when I buy other people's plants that their soil is much heavier than mine. I use two parts perlite, one part vermiculite and one part soil mix. I also use Violet Mix or Sunshine Mix from Wal-Mart which are good, too. I really don't have any special tricks for my plants. I keep them close to the lights, wick water them, keep the soil light and airy, and vary the plant food.

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New Slide Program — 1998 Convention Flower Show

Continuing our slide programs featuring the best of the entries at the Convention Flower Show, we are offering a new program again this year. You are invited to tour the show for your own view of "Chicago is ... *Your Kind of Town!*" to see some of the 142 entries exhibited.

To request this new slide program with typed commentary, send a check payable to AGGS for \$20 to Marlene Beam, 1736 S. Oakland Street, Aurora, CO 80012. Specify the date when the program will be shown and give as much lead time as possible. Your request will be acknowledged and the program will arrive at least one week in advance of your date. You must return the program via UPS insured for \$100 or via First Class Priority Mail within five days after your show date.



Sinningia pusilla exhibited by Dale Martens; photo by Michael Riley

Sinningia pusilla

Dale Martens <martens@wt.net>
2728 Masters Drive, League City, TX 77573

Last year Becky Pinion gave me a medicine cup filled with *Sinningia pusilla* seedlings. I'm not one to coddle plants, and I grow micro-miniature sinningias without a terrarium environment. I began to use New Zealand sphagnum moss as a growing medium after talking with Mollie Howell of Florida and Delores Gibbs of Texas. I firmly packed a 2-1/8 inch pot with wet NZ sphagnum moss and centered a wick made of pantyhose. I placed one *S. pusilla* seedling in the center of the pot and arranged four others around it. I buried the tubers about half an inch from the top of the pot. I alternated Dyna-Gro and Plant Marvel at 1/4 teaspoon per gallon for fertilizing needs. I leached the pot about every eight weeks with distilled water. When the upper layer of NZ sphagnum moss became green with algae, I removed that with tweezers and replaced it with fresh moss.

I entered the *Sinningia pusilla* at the violet convention in April 1998, where it received a Best in Class award. I was too busy to pay attention to it when I returned to Texas. For an entire week I neglected to place it on the reservoir. It dried out totally! After a self-scolding, I used scissors to trim the entire top layer. Not a single leaf remained. I poured plain water through the pot to revive the NZ sphagnum moss before placing it on the reservoir. To cheer myself, I began looking around the plant room for possible show plants for the AGGS Convention which was ten weeks away.

The *Sinningia pusilla* rallied like no other plant I've ever known. In the next few weeks I watched in amazement as it began filling the pot with leaves and buds. It arrived at Chicago's AGGS Convention in full bloom!

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Gesneriads, The Internet and You

David Turley <dturley@pobox.com>
6118 Windsor Dr., Fredericksburg, VA 22407

As I write this, the AGGS Convention in Chicago is history. The Northern Illinois Chapter worked very hard to present a wonderful convention and a fun experience for all of us. Hats off to the entire group! You can read all about the convention elsewhere in this issue. There are also lots of pictures from convention on the AGGS web site. Be sure to check them out.

We held an open meeting of the Internet Communications Committee at convention and it was very well attended. I enjoyed meeting many of you. I also received many comments and suggestions, both at this meeting, and throughout the week. I appreciate the feedback very much. The only way to make the AGGS Web site work for YOU, is for you to provide feedback. It was indeed a pleasure to hear from many people concerning what they like, and don't like, about the web site. I am pleased to report that the responses have been overwhelmingly positive.

I'd like to share with you part of my annual report to the AGGS Board of Directors concerning AGGS' Internet presence:

"I am pleased to report a stellar year for the American Gloxinia & Gesneriad Society on the Internet. Many new features have been added to our web site this past year and our visitors increased.

"One of the most exciting aspects of AGGS' online presence is the number of board members, committee chair, and chapter contacts who are listed with email contacts. All 6 officers, 14 out of 21 directors, 19 of 26 committee chairmen, along with all staff members are reachable through this medium. Additionally, 27 of 37 chapters have at least one email contact listed. I know of no other horticultural organization that is so reachable. (Note that these numbers may have changed a bit with the elections and appointments of new board members, but are still remarkable.)

"Although the main purpose of the AGGS web site is to promote the society and gain new members, it is important to provide general gesneriad information as well. To this end, our gesneriad photo gallery continues to grow. We are indebted to Jeanne Katzenstein and Maryjane Evans for taking the time to help greatly expand our photo archives. Jeanne had many photos from THE GLOXINIAN put onto photo CDs. Maryjane donated more than 50 photos taken by John Evans. With these disks full of photos I am able to rapidly expand the gallery.

"On a related note, it is now even easier to submit photos and other files for inclusion on the AGGS web site. I have added a special file upload page to the web site. By accessing this page, you can use your web browser to upload files directly to the server. When a file has been uploaded, I receive an email notification alerting me to retrieve the file. This feature is especially useful if someone is unable to send email with attached files. Additionally, I can download the files at my convenience, rather than being surprised when I retrieve my mail. A password is required to use the upload feature; contact me for a password if you need one.

"Perhaps the most exciting new feature added to the web site this past year is the online membership application. By filling out a web-based version of the membership application, new members can join AGGS and have

their dues charged to a credit card. Membership renewals may also be submitted through the web page. The response to this feature has been outstanding, in fact it is much more than I anticipated. Also added this year was a form for ordering AGGS pins and T-shirts online.

"The message board continues to be a popular feature. The public continues to find this a useful area for getting their gesneriad (and even non-gesneriad) questions answered. Over 300 messages have been posted in the first half of this year. I'd like to thank the many board members and committee chairpersons who have contributed by answering questions, including Jeanne Katzenstein, John Boggan, Al Wojcik, Dee Stewart, Dave Tyler, Maryjane Evans, Suzie Larouche, and Susan Grose. There are many AGGS members who are not board members who participate as well. I encourage everyone to visit the message forum occasionally and help us show how helpful AGGS members are."

As you can see, AGGS has a successful and useful Internet presence, but we aren't stopping there! Plans are in the works to provide more information and more interactive features. Stay tuned. Now let's look at some recent postings to the message board on our web site. Speaking of the AGGS Convention, AGGS Research Fund grant recipient and convention speaker, **Dr. Ethan Russo** posted a request for plant material needed for his research. I'll repeat it here.

"I was glad to have the opportunity to meet some of you at the AGGS meeting. I would like to follow-up with you on the possibility of obtaining



Dr. Ethan Russo with Leslie Brothers and Laura Shannon
at the Chicago Botanic Garden

cuttings or rooted cuttings of the following species to help continue my biochemical research: *Alloplectus panamensis*, *Codonanthe uleana*, *Columnea (Dalbergaria) crassa*, *Columnea (Dalbergaria) dimidiata*, *Drymonia pendula*, *Nautilocalyx kohlerioides*, *Nautilocalyx whitei*, *Reldia veraguensis*. Seeds would be a possibility, but I have been pretty bad at that aspect of culture with this family."

If you can help, contact Dr. Russo at <ptm5739@montana.com>. And if you missed Dr. Russo's talk, well, you should have been there!

Mark Zukaitis asked for growing advice for *Nematanthus albus* 'Santa Teresa':

"I obtained a plant from a local AV show about a year ago and it seems to be growing fine. I particularly like the fragrance of the foliage. I know nothing about this plant, how to get it to flower, etc. Could someone give me advice?"



Nematanthus sp. nov. (*albus* ined.);
grown and photographed by Ray Annabel

John Boggan replied:

"*Nematanthus albus*" is the unpublished species name for the plant that has been distributed with the temporary name 'Santa Teresa'. Grow it the same as any other large nematanthus: well-drained soil, not too wet, with good light. It will produce a good-sized hanging basket. Just wait until it blooms! The huge (and I mean HUGE) white flowers look more like an oversized codonanthe and are powerfully fragrant!"

Suzie Larouche responded as well:

"*N. albus* 'Santa Teresa' does indeed have stunningly large and powerfully fragrant blossoms (some would even say the fragrance was overpoweringly garbage-like; but then, odor perception is a very personal thing. The only time I got mine to bloom was out of doors. I hung the basket on a north facing wall that saw the sun for a half hour or so at sunrise and then was in deep shade. The results were great. Different exposures were totally unsuccessful."

Attesting to the popularity of this plant, **Nancy Maybloom** also contributed:

"I've been growing this in an east window, and it opened the first flowers in June, though the buds seem to have started developing back in October and stayed in a state of "suspended animation" for months. I brought the plant to a chapter meeting, where the consensus on the fragrance was "rancid bacon grease". Eventually I was asked to remove it from the room. The flowers are beautiful to look at, though!"

Growing advice is a common topic on the message board. **Doris Gohl** had this query:

"Could someone please tell about growing an episcia? We bought a plant and half the leaves were brown. Can it be saved? Also how often should it be fertilized and what fertilizer should we use?"

Denice Harline contributed:

"You should remove any brown or dead material, and don't forget to fertilize once a week along with your other plants. Use 1/4 tsp. to a gallon of water. Any good fertilizer will work. Don't forget plenty of light but not direct sun. For bigger plants remove the stolons (the new plants) until you get the plant the size you want. Then you can let the stolons grow and share with friends. If you need any more info let me know."

Michael Kaprelian also helped out:

"Episcias are fairly easy to grow. They love warmth and humidity. In fact, I think episcias like more heat than any other plant I grow. I live in Fort Worth, TX and my air conditioner has been out of service for two days (they're replacing it right now). My other gesneriads are stressed, but the episcias seem unphased.

"For bloom they require more light than African violets, but will grow well in less light. Keep the soil evenly moist. If you have crispy brown leaves remove them. Unless your humidity is desert dry, the plant should adjust to your conditions, and grow well. They really are forgiving, especially for such exotic plants.

"One other thing...in winter don't allow the temperature to drop much below 55 degrees or episcias will die. A good average temp would be 65–90 degrees F."

Sinningia speciosa seems to be making a resurgence in popularity. **Lauren Culler** posted this question:

"Thank goodness I found your sight. I received a sinningia (gloxinia) two years ago from my husband at the birth of our first daughter. When I got the plant it looked like a little circle of leaves with about 4-5 blooms (this was in July). Since then it has grown two long vine-like stems that are at

least 10 inches each with leaves up and down. Each stem(?) has one bloom on it this year. How or should I cut them back so it looks like it did when I first got it (a little compact plant) or is it suppose to grow like this? I would appreciate any help. Thanks."

David Turley responded:

"Most likely the plant is not getting enough light. Florist gloxinias actually take a very bright light to stay compact. When the next crown starts growing, be sure to give the plant as much light as possible. They will even tolerate a bit of direct sunlight thru a window."

John Boggan also contributed:

"A northwest or east window is perfect, or even a south window if it gets some shade from trees in the summer, but if you put the plant directly in sunlight after it has been growing in low light, the leaves may scorch. It's best to put the plant in bright light when it's just starting to put out new growth from the tuber. And be aware that it will need watering more often when it is in brighter light—although sinningias in general are pretty tolerant of drying out, since they have the tuber to store water."

Karla Bjorge had a question on this plant as well:

"I just received a leaf from a gloxinia, please tell me how to root it. In water, or soil?"

Ron Myhr provided this useful information:

"The Florist gloxinia (hybrids of *Sinningia speciosa*) can often grow quite large with very large leaves. Rooting can be difficult, but is easier (just from the point of view of convenience) with a smaller leaf. You can trim the main part of the leaf to make for a smaller and more manageable size.

"It is best to root the leaf in "soil", preferably a soilless growing medium of the sort sold at plant stores and nurseries. You can also use vermiculite, also available at plant stores, and some people prefer this. Trim the bottom of the stem to make a nice clean cut, and insert the stem as far into the rooting medium as possible. Put the whole thing (leaf and pot) into a container of some sort, even a clear plastic bag, to keep up the humidity around the leaf. Put it in a place with bright light but no direct sun.

"After a few weeks, the leaf will have rooted and started to form a tuber (gloxinias grow from a tuberous root). The leaf may die down eventually, and if it does, set the pot with the tuber aside, putting on some water occasionally to keep it from drying out completely. Eventually, shoots will come from the tuber, and you can grow these on to produce the spectacular flowers of this beautiful type of gesneriad."

Anthony was also interested in propagating these plants:

"Two years ago my sister had been given a beautiful gloxinia as a gift. The flowers were large and colorful. Envious as I was, I took a leaf and rooted it back home. The following year it made a tuber and now I've been rewarded with more bloom than she got in the original. Last year I took another cutting and rooted it and again it made a small tuber, but for some reason it did not take hold like the previous one. It never sprouted from the tuber. My ? is, Can it only be done by one generation of a plant to succeed? Anyone know?"

Once again, **Ron Myhr** helped out:

"There is no reason that a Florist gloxinia (hybrids of *Sinningia speciosa*) can't be propagated through many generations. But sometimes, it doesn't work. Be patient, though, as a tuber can take some time to sprout.

"I assume that you have saved the tuber from your original plant (the one propagated from your sister's leaf). Remember, it will go dormant, but will resprout eventually."

Byron Borek started an interesting conversation with his question about judging episcias:

"My son had some nice episcias at the national violets show last April. He received some red ribbons on some of his entries with the comment to remove the stolons. I cannot find any information which says to remove the stolons. Can someone point me in the right direction? Many gesneriad growers attending this show were also puzzled."

Jeff Rosenstiel had this interesting comment:

"When I have entered episcias I have learned that it's all in the hands of the judges, their mood and what else is entered in the show. I have been told not to remove them and to remove them. I have had the same plant win blue in one show and red in another. So that's just the way it goes sometimes."

Carl Walker, Jr. also contributed:

"The shape of the plant is important for show, and people are inclined to leave stolons that hang and don't give good shape.

"Stolons in most cases can be removed where they come out.

"I remember a woman talking about a person who brought a huge episcia to a show and she told him it needed shaping. He was almost ready to cry on seeing all she removed—but it got a blue ribbon!

"Oddly enough my episcias tended to be that way until one winter when they froze back leaving only a little live stem in the pot. New growth came out all over the stem and I ended up with the fullest best-looking episcias I've ever seen. After that I didn't hesitate to pinch back.

"When you enter in a show, the rules can be very important—realized that when I went to AV Convention show many years ago and was surprised to find the prettiest to me wasn't always the winner. My favorite of all the AVs didn't get a blue ribbon with a note about too much space between leaves."

Carol Callagan provided this viewpoint:

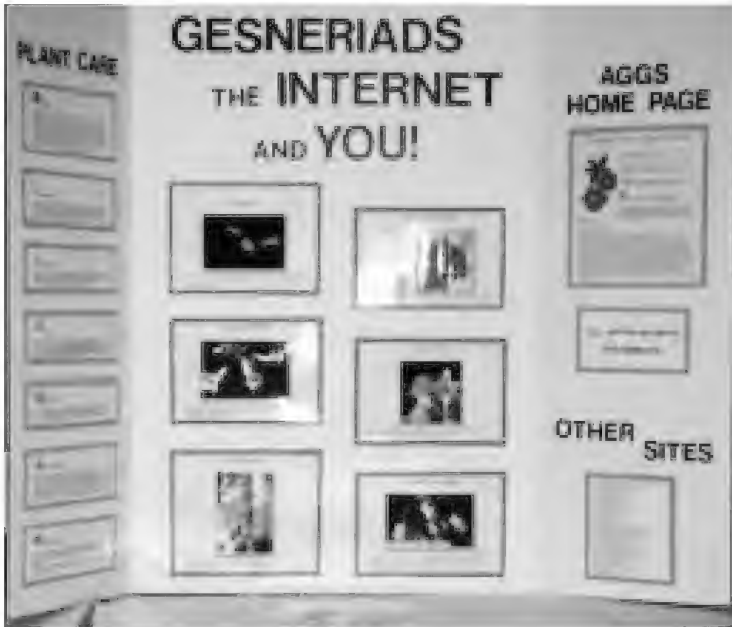
"I'm an AVSA judge, an AGGS judge, plus a National Council judge, so I have seen a variety of judging styles. Gesneriads are difficult to judge because there is such a variety in the plants in the whole family that there are no hard, fast rules like African violets or roses have. I personally like to see an episcia grown with a strong center plant by removing the stolons in the early stages of the plant's growth. Then, after a strong main plant is developed, you can let the stolons begin to grow. I think this makes a better looking plant exhibiting both the cultural perfection and grooming that judges are looking for. Elbert's book, *The Miracle Houseplants: The Gesneriad Family*, says "If stolons are religiously removed whenever they appear,

flowering is much encouraged, and new growth will start up from the base of the stem. In this way, within a relatively short time, you will have several stems which will grow very slowly and produce an endless series of flowers. ... you will never have the untidy trailing which would have taken place had the stolons not been removed." Hope this helps. Also remember, each stolon is the start of another plant!"

The message board continues to be one of the most popular "stops" on the AGGS web site. I hope you will visit, and contribute regularly.

One last note—as the web site continues to grow, we have made it easier for you to find out what's new on the site. Simply click the "What's New" link on the AGGS Home Page. A list of the fifteen most recent updates or additions will be generated, complete with links to those new areas.

Keep those comments and suggestions coming. You can write me at <webmaster@aggs.org>. The AGGS Web site is at <<http://www.aggs.org>>.



Educational Exhibit entered by Karen Makila

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Round Robin News

Suzie Larouche <suzielaro@sympatico.ca>
949, av. des Érables, app.4, Québec QC G1R 2M6 Canada

Who said that snail mail isn't popular anymore? Let them see our Round Robins! Although I couldn't be at convention, all my apologies to those who expected me. The decision was totally out of my control—I am still alive and well and so are the robins. New people are coming in from all over. We now have the following robins going on: two on General Gesneriad Growing with one more to start soon, and one each on Episcias and Gesneriads Grown for Foliage, Lesser Known Gesneriads, and Streptocarpus. One on Mini Sinningias and Tiny Gesneriads is just about ready to fly and could be subdivided if enough interest is shown. As well, there have been inquiries about a robin for Commercial Growers. Any more takers on the latter? Let me know.

Your requests to participate in a robin are always welcome and I try to reply to each as fast as possible. However, there may be some delay early in 1999 since I am planning to move to Toronto in the first days of January. (Ah! To be a member of a chapter again!) Things may get a little hectic here, but every request will be processed and I apologize in advance for any delays.

Good growing to all of you, and don't be greedy—share your experiences with others.



Streptocarpus Collection exhibited by Nancy Maybloom;
photo by Stanley Schwartz

S. 'Burgundy', S. 'Gator's Tail', S. 'Al's Pal', S. 'Strawberry Crush' (clockwise)

Botanical Review Committee—Report #17

compiled by Frances Batcheller and John Boggan

African Violet Magazine

Vol. 49(2): 44, May–June 1996, "Intergenerics", Dale Martens. This article describes crosses between different genera with scaly rhizomes. A new intergeneric hybrid resulted. The author's new cultivar, \times *Phinastema* 'California Dreaming', resulted from the cross *Phinaea albolineata* \times *Diastema comiferum*.

American Journal of Botany

Vol. 84(7): 956–965, 1997, "Origin and Relationships of *Saintpaulia*", Michael Möller and Quentin C.B. Cronk. A strong relationship was found between *Saintpaulia* and Madagascar species of *Streptocarpus* subgenus *Streptocarpella*. The results suggest that *Saintpaulia* has evolved from within subgenus *Streptocarpella*. The rosulate habit and untwisted capsule may be adaptations to a habitat on wet rocks, and the shortening of the corolla tube to the change of pollinators from a nectar seeker to a pollen seeker.

Caldasia

Vol. 17 (82–85): 383–388 (illus.), 1995, "Notas sobre el genero *Anetanthus* Hieron. Ex Benth. (Gesneriaceae) en Colombia", Jose Luis Fernández A. The distribution of *Anetanthus gracilis* in Colombia is described, and new subspecies, *A. gracilis* subsp. *munchiquensis*, is recognized. In Spanish with English abstract.

Descriptive Flora of Puerto Rico

Gesneriaceae, Vol. 4, pp. 564–579, 1995, Alain Liogier. The genera covered in this floristic treatment are *Chrysothemis*, *Episcia*, *Alloplectus*, *Columnnea*, *Gesneria*, *Rhytidophyllum*, and *Gloxinia*. Brief descriptions of the Puerto Rican species of these genera are provided. With illustrations and keys. In Spanish.

Journal of Plant Research

Vol. 109: 339–342 (illus.), 1996, "Acute morphological changes of palisade cells of *Saintpaulia* leaves induced by a rapid temperature drop", Jae Gill Yuri, Takahiro Hayashi, Susumo Yazawa, Tetzuya Katch, and Yuko Yusuda. Leaf spots on African Violet leaves are caused by cold water.

Novon

Vol. 7: 281–284 (illus.), 1997, "A New Species of *Solenophora*", Angela Ramirez-Roa and Guillermo Ibarre-Manríquez. *Solenophora tuxtensis* is a new species from Veracruz, Mexico. The species was originally collected by Dale Denham. *Solenophora tuxtensis* is a tall shrub with showy flowers, 1–2 in each axil. The corolla is yellow with purple spots. It is uncommon, found growing on rocks in small rivers.

Vol. 36: 303–309 (illus.), 1997, "Gesneriad Flora of Los Cedros Biological Reserve, Northwest Ecuador, Part 1: Four New Species in *Gasteranthus*", Martin Freiberg. Four new species of *Gasteranthus* are described. *Gasteranthus giganteus* grows in montane forests in humid and shady areas close to creeks. It is similar to *G. crispus* but taller with shiny leaves crowded together on the upper quarter of the stem. *Gasteranthus imbaburensis* is similar to *G. carinatus*. The inflorescence forms in the upper axils with 8–15 vermilion flowers. Found only in higher parts of the region above 1700 m. *Gasteranthus leopardus* differs from *G. wendlandianus* in the yellow corolla with brown-purple spots like those of a leopard. *Gasteranthus trifolius* is a terrestrial slightly branched shrub with three leaves at a node. It is a common shrub in the area.

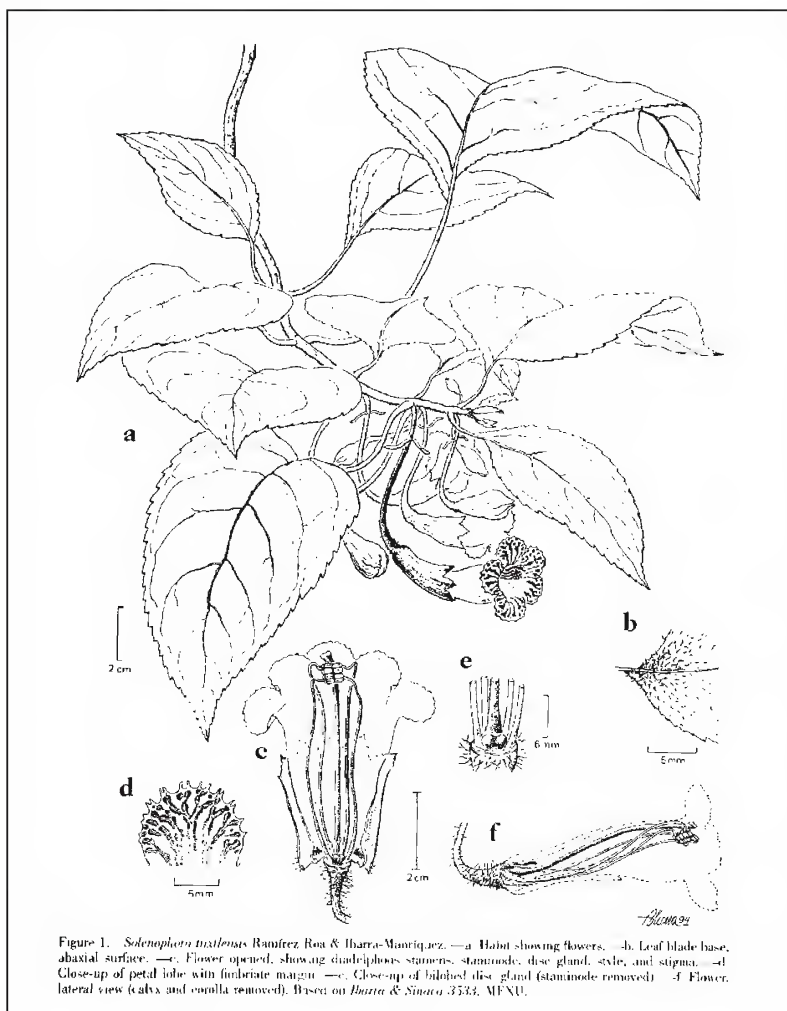


Figure 1. *Solenophora tuxtlensis* Ramírez Ros & Ibarra-Muniz. —a. Habit showing flowers. —b. Leaf blade base, abaxial surface. —c. Flower opened, showing diadelphous stamens, staminal disc gland, style, and stigma. —d. Close-up of petal lobe with fimbriate margin. —e. Close-up of bilobed disc gland (staminode removed). —f. Flower, lateral view (calyx and corolla removed). Based on Barria & Simoes 3533, MEXU.

Solenophora tuxtlensis illustration from Novon

Sinningia tuberosa Revisited

Mauro Peixoto <mpeixoto@uol.com.br>

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Vila Industrial 03257-070 Sao Paulo SP, Brazil

Some years ago I collected three plants of *Sinningia tuberosa* in a small town called Ouro Preto, about 100 miles east of Belo Horizonte, the capital of Minas Gerais State, home of several rupicolous sinningias like *S. tuberosa*, *S. striata*, *S. magnifica*, *S. douglasii*, *S. rupicola*, etc.

Well, as my last tuber of *S. tuberosa* died, I began thinking about collecting at least one more tuber, because I was intending to cross it with some miniatures, just to see what happened.

Early in the morning on November 7th, a friend of mine and I headed to Ouro Preto, a 450-mile trip from my home. We could drive directly on the highway, but as a good plant nut, I chose to go through secondary roads where we hoped to find some more plants. Fourteen hours later and hundreds of stops at every place that might have gesneriads, we arrived at Cachoeira das Andorinhas (Swallow Waterfall), the home of *S. tuberosa*. This place is called so because a creek runs into an outcrop of stones forming caves and small waterfalls where thousands of big swallows live.

Although it was about 6:30 p.m., the sun was high in the sky because of our summer saving time, so we had plenty of time to take pictures, collect, and appreciate the sunset in the mountains. *Sinningia tuberosa* is a very peculiar gesneriad, as it has only one big deciduous leaf (about 8" x 5" on a mature plant), and the tubular red flowers pop directly from the small tuber and the woody small stem that holds the leaf.

Another oddity is its habitat. It only can be found in the caves, or where two rocks meet, giving shelter from the sun and rain. Almost all plants are found on the north side (remember that we are south of the equator), and although it is the brighter side, some are in very dark places where the sun can never reach them; and the only water that they receive is the water running between the rocks when it rains. But even those plants that are far in the dark (one saintpaulia would hold its leaves up in a 90 degree position and never bloom) look very healthy and give a lot of red blooms inviting hummingbirds to visit and pollinate them.

We collected two more tubers, then went to the hotel for a good rest until the next day when we went to Serra da Piedade, home of *Sinningia rupicola*, *S. magnifica* and *Paliavana sericiflora*, but that is another story...

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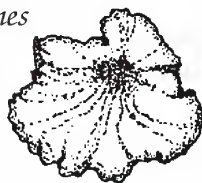
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Sinningia tuberosa growing at the Smithsonian Greenhouses;
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Jeanne Katzenstein admiring the
Alsobia dianthiflora teddy bear at the
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Libby Watkins leaving with her
 entries at the close of the flower show
 — see you at convention next year!

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